



press clip

Dads need to bond and be involved

CATHERINE LAMBERT

Dads are being urged to be hands on from the moment their baby is born. Author and midwife Cath Curtin said modern dads love being involved with their children but need to start taking an active role with newborns.

"Dads all want to be involved and to have a connection but often don't know what to do," Ms Curtin said.

"They just need some structure, practical advice and direction."

Ms Curtin has worked closely with former Collingwood captain Nick Maxwell, his wife Erin, and his children Milla, 5, Archie, 3, and now Raff who was born three weeks ago.

"A lot of the time dads think they have to wait until their kids are active and they can take them to kick the footy or to the park before they get involved," Mr Maxwell said.

"But you can have just as much impact in the early days."

From the moment his children have been born, Mr Maxwell has been hands on by making dinner for the family when he comes home from work and giving his wife Erin a break.

She breast feeds during the day and goes to bed at 9pm while Mr Maxwell bathes the baby at 10pm, gives him a bottle at 11pm and he sleeps until 4am when Mrs Maxwell resumes breast feeding.

"After the bath I do a baby massage on his back and talk to him and he enjoys it — they all have," he said.

"Cath says I'm a star wrapper because she taught me how to wrap the babies up when they go to bed so it's like they're in a cocoon. They have all been good sleepers."

Ms Curtin said her new book *The First Six Weeks*, gave fathers practical advice on how to be involved: "It gives the guys direction and it makes sense because this is how we get the babies to sleep."

"Most people bathe their babies at 6pm but the bath relaxes the baby so they have a good sleep but then they're up and ready to

party all night just when you're wanting to go to sleep. The 10pm bath really is the answer to a good night's sleep."

Nick Maxwell with his new baby Raff, and son Archie. Picture-Nicole Cleary

